

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS:

Claims 1-10 are canceled without prejudice. Claims 11-20 have been previously canceled. Claim 34 is amended. New dependent claims 40-54 are added. Claims 21-54 are pending in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claim 34 is amended to correct a typographical error.

Claims 1, 3-6, 8-10 and 21-39 were rejected as being obvious over Tokoro (US 6,349,324) in view of Baldwin et al. (US 5,877,757). Claims 2 and 7 were rejected as being obvious over Tokoro in view of Baldwin et al. and further in view of Chelliah (US 5,710,887). These rejections as applied to claims 1-10 are moot in view of the cancellation of these claims. The rejections as applied to claims 21-39 are respectfully traversed.

The present application relates to a communication system. Independent claim 21 recites a method for communicating information between computers, which includes the following steps (emphasis added):

a first computer receiving from its user an input indicating a telephone number for an information source;

the first computer obtaining from a database a network identification of the information source based on the telephone number;

the first computer establishing a network connection with a second computer of the information source using the network identification; and

the first computer displaying information obtained from the second computer.

Independent claim 34 recites a method of interfacing between a user and an information system including a plurality of networked computers, which includes, inter alia, a step of “the first computer obtaining from a database a network identification of the information source based on the telephone number”. The applicant submits that none of the cited references teaches or suggests the underlined steps of claims 21 and 34.

Tokoro essentially teaches a video conferencing system; what is displayed on the screen is essentially what is in front of a camera at the remote side. The process of establishing a communication is most clearly illustrated in Fig. 7 of Tokoro. The way the IP addresses are communicated is as follows: The terminal adapter 202 on the calling side transmits its IP own address (202) to the portable telephone 201 on the calling side, which is then transmitted to the telephone 301 and terminal adapter 302 on the “answering” side. Then the terminal adapter 302 on the answering side transmits its IP own address (302) to the telephone 301 on the answering side, which is then transmitted to the telephone 201 and terminal adapter 202 on the calling side. In other words, the IP address of the answering side is obtained from the answering side itself, rather than from a database as required in claim 21 of the present application. The answering side devices (terminal adapter 302, portable telephone 301) in Tokoro are not a database because it only provides its own IP address. Each time a calling side wishes to establish a connection with a particular answering side, the calling side must call the answering side to obtain the IP address of the answering side. Thus, the Tokoro reference does not teach the claimed step of “the first computer obtaining from a database a network identification of the information source based on the telephone number”. Thus, Tokoro does not teach or suggest the step of “the first computer obtaining ...” in claims 21 and 34.

The Baldwin et al. reference, directed to method and system for providing user help information in network applications, was cited for teaching limitations related to touchscreen in the present claims. This reference describes a remote help system, about obtaining information from another computer and putting it on the screen through the web. This reference does not teach anything about a telephone or telephone numbers. The Chelliah reference, directed to a computer system and method for electronic commerce, was cited for teaching limitations related to charge accounts in the present claims. This reference mentions telephones as one of the possible user interface devices (Fig. 1; col. 6, lines 31-34), but does not teach any specific use of telephone numbers in connection with the electronic commerce system. Thus, these references do not teach or suggest the step of "the first computer obtaining ..." in claims 21 and 34.

Accordingly, the applicant submits that claims 21 and 34, as well as claims 22-33 and 35-39 that depend therefrom, are patentable over the cited references either taken along or in combination.

New claims 40 - 54 depend from claim 34 and are therefore also patentable.

Claims 40 and 43 specify that the database is a database that links telephone numbers to network address information in a cross directory. Claims 41, 42, 44 and 45 further specifies the database information. The support for these claims may be found in the specification at, for example, p. 10, lines 27-31.

Claims 46 and 47 relate to a feature of the invention where the network connection between the two computers is established through using nothing more than traditional telephone interface and method (a telephone number). This allows users with no computer experience can experience the multimedia experience of the web – the user can pick up a phone, dial a number, and see the website of where she is phoning. The support for claims 42 and 43 may be found in the specification at,

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for example, p. 3, lines 14-17; p. 6, lines 22-27; p. 8, lines 13-20; and p. 10, lines 27-31.

Claims 48 and 49 relate to a "visual answering machine" function described in the specification at, for example, p. 11, lines 20-22.

Claims 50 to 53 relate to what might be referred to as a visual version of an automated voice response system widely used by business in the audio form. Support for these claims may be found in the specification at, for example, p. 29, lines 1-15; and p. 26, lines 14-24 and Figs 21-28.

The support for claim 54 may be found in the specification at, for example, p. 2, line 21 to p. 3, line 3; p. 3, lines 13-25; p. 17, lines 12-16.

The art made of record but not relied upon by the Examiner has been considered. However, it is submitted that this art neither describes nor suggests the presently claimed invention.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, are requested. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, California telephone number (213) 337-6700 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.


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Respectfully submitted,
HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.

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By: 
Ying Chen
Registration No. 50,193
Attorneys for Applicant

500 South Grand Avenue, Suite 1900
Los Angeles, California 90071
Phone: 213-337-6700
Fax: 213-337-6701